

Remarks/Arguments

Reconsideration of this Application is requested.

Claims 1-6 have been rejected by the Examiner under 35 USC §103 as being unpatentable over Chen, et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,943,408) in view of Freeman (U.S. Patent No. 6,020,980).

Chen discloses the following in the Abstract:

"A direct signaling system for providing system subscribers with the freedom to access service providers of their choice, regardless of their access network arrangement, with substantially minimum change to existing telecommunication software and architecture. The system provides a home interface unit and a call server that enables a subscriber to send signaling messages to and receive messages from the service providers of their choice. The home interface unit and call server execute state machines that provide specific details of system operation. The call server state machine triggers a state machine and thus operation of the service specific servers chosen by the subscriber."

Chen discloses the following in lines 24-32 of column 9:

"The automatic call-back service allows a user to automatically call the last number from which it received an incoming call. To invoke the service, in one embodiment, the user enters the digits #69. The processing logic for one embodiment of this service, as well as its modifications to the tcps of the call server state machines are shown in FIG. 11. As shown, this service requires two actions: storing the phone number of calling parties for incoming calls, and retrieving the number when the local user dials #69."

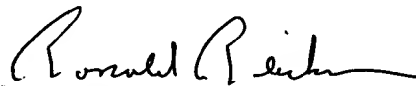
Freeman discloses the following in lines 32-37 of column 3:

"A system and method is provided for delivering facsimile messages, generated by facsimile devices, to an electronic mail (e-mail) address as an object file attached to an e-mail message. The object file may be any of a variety of types of graphical image files, as selected by the receiver."

Neither Chen nor Freeman, taken separately or together, discloses the invention claimed by Applicants in claim 1, as amended, and those claims dependent thereon. Chen and Freeman do not disclose anything about physical mail. Thus, the references do not disclose or anticipate the following steps of claim 1, as amended, namely, depositing with the carrier physical mail containing the recipient's name and physical address and the sender's name and address; capturing the name and physical address of the recipient and the sender from the physical mail; and delivering physical mail to the recipient in the manner specified by the recipient to the carrier, if the sender elects to permit the recipient to divert the physical mail.

In view of the above, claims 1-6, as amended, are patentable. If the Examiner has any questions, would the Examiner please telephone the undersigned at the telephone number noted below.

Respectfully submitted,



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